

Eleutherococcus humillimus, a New Combination in Chinese Araliaceae

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ABSTRACT. A new combination, *Eleutherococcus humillimus* (Y. S. Lian & X. L. Chen) Y. F. Deng, is made.

Key words: *Acanthopanax*, Araliaceae, China, *Eleutherococcus*.

Eleutherococcus Maximowicz (1859) is the correct name for the genus previously widely referred to as *Acanthopanax* (Decaisne & Planchon) Witte (1861). Nomenclatural problems involving these genera have been discussed by several authors over the years (Hu, 1980; Ohashi, 1987; Hsu & Pan, 1993; Zhu et al., 1995). *Eleutherococcus* has about 25 species distributed mainly in northeastern Asia, including China, Korea, and Japan, with some members extending to southwestern Asia (Kim & Sun, 2000).

Acanthopanax was recognized at the subgeneric rank under *Panax* L. by Decaisne and Planchon (1854), and was later raised by Witte (1861) to generic rank. Harms (1897: 49) combined both under one genus and adopted the name *Acanthopanax*, which has been widely used since by many botanists (Harms, 1918; Li, 1942; Hoo & Tseng, 1978; Philipson, 1979; Shang, 1985a, 1985b). However, the name *Acanthopanax* does not have priority under the current ICBN (Greuter et al., 2000), and several recent authors (e.g., Hu, 1980; Stone, 1980; Ohashi, 1987; Hsu & Pan, 1993; Zhu et al., 1995) have accordingly transferred taxa from *Acanthopanax* to *Eleutherococcus*.

In 1918 Harms classified the genus into seven sections, namely, sect. *Eleutherococcus*, sect. *Cephalopanax*, sect. *Euacanthopanax*, sect. *Zanthoxylopanax*, sect. *Evodiopanax*, sect. *Sciadophylloides*, and sect. *Kalopanax*. This system has been accepted by many authors (Hoo & Tseng, 1978; Shang, 1985a, 1985b; Ohashi, 1987), but section *Kalopanax*, typified by *K. pictus* (Thunberg) Nakai, is generally treated as a distinct genus. Several years later, Nakai (1924) elevated section *Evodiopanax* to generic rank, then Shang et al. (2000) synonymized it with *Gamblea* C. B. Clarke and made four new combinations. Shang and Huang

(1993) raised section *Sciadophylloides* to generic rank as *Chengiopanax* C. B. Shang & J. Y. Huang with two species, *C. fargesii* (Franchet) C. B. Shang & J. Y. Huang and *C. sciadophylloides* (Franchet & Savatier) C. B. Shang & J. Y. Huang. Recognition of the unarmed genera *Gamblea* and *Chengiopanax* as distinct from *Eleutherococcus*, which has spines or prickles, was recently confirmed using ITS sequence data (Wen et al., 2001).

Acanthopanax humillimus Y. S. Lian & X. L. Chen was described by Lian and Chen (1994) based on collections from Gansu Province, China, but the necessary combination in *Eleutherococcus* is made here.

Eleutherococcus humillimus (Y. S. Lian & X. L. Chen) Y. F. Deng, comb. nov. Basionym: *Acanthopanax humillimus* Y. S. Lian & X. L. Chen, Acta Bot. Boreal.-Occid. Sin. 14(6): 76. 1994. TYPE: China. Gansu: Lintan Xian, "Lianhua mountain, in locis udis regionis in sylvis," 2700 m, 9 July 1994, Y. S. Lian et al. 94065 (holotype, NWTC).

Distribution. A rare species endemic to southern Gansu and northern Sichuan Provinces of China, in alpine habitats at high elevations (2700–3000 m).

Eleutherococcus humillimus most closely resembles *E. giraldii* (Harms) Nakai but differs in being a subshrub, only 5–15 cm tall (vs. 1–3 m), with 3 or 4 (rarely 5) ovaries and styles (vs. 5 ovaries and styles), the latter connate for ca. 1/5 their length (rather than 1/4–1/2). *Eleutherococcus humillimus* occurs at high elevations and may be an alpine vicariant of *E. giraldii*.

Additional specimens examined. CHINA. **Sichuan:** Hongyuan Xian, Shuajingsi, Yakou, alt. 3450 m, in ravine, 8 Oct. 1957, Li Xing 72410 (IBSC, SZ); Hongyuan Xian, Shuajingsi, Yakou, alt. 3400 m, 9 Oct. 1957, Li Xing 72444 (IBSC, SZ); Nanping Xian, Jiuzhaigou, 3200 m, in *Picea* forest, 25 Sep. 1986, Wu Zhengyi et al. 811 (KUN); Nanping xian, Jiuzhaigou, Changhai, 2800 m, in *Picea* forest, 26 Sep. 1986, Wu Zhengyi et al. 982 (KUN); Nanping Xian, Jiuzhaigou, in forest, 25 Sep. 1986, Wu Zhengyi et al. 1110 (KUN); Zoigê (Ruergai) Xian, Baxi gongshe,

Yangyugou, in *Picea* forest, alt. 3100 m, 28 June 1975, *Chengdu Biological Institute 10063* (IBSC). **Gansu:** Dangchang xian, Daheba, in subalpine shrubby, alt. 3000 m, 24 Sep. 1979, *Lian Yongshan 790922* (NWTC); Tewo xian, Lazikou Linchang, in the forest, on the rock, alt. 3000 m, 24 July 1980, *Lian Yongshan et al. 800222* (NWTC).

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